

CITY OF MUSKEGON
PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

June 15, 2017

Chairman T. Michalski called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: F. Peterson, T. Michalski, B. Larson, S. Gawron, M. Hovey-Wright

MEMBERS ABSENT: J. Doyle, excused; E. Hood, excused; J. Montgomery-Keast, excused;
B. Mazade, excused

STAFF PRESENT: M. Franzak, D. Renkenberger

OTHERS PRESENT: D. Morse, 2321 Duck Lake Rd.; M. McKee, Mart Dock

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the Minutes of the special Planning Commission meeting of May 22, 2017 was made by F. Peterson, supported by B. Larson and unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Hearing, Case 2017-14: Request for a Special Use Permit to operate a banquet facility, community center, day care, office and ice cream shop in an R-1, Single Family Low Density Residential District at 2330 Barclay Street by 1 Chronicles 4:10, LLC. M. Franzak presented the staff report. The building at 2330 Barclay St was formerly the location of the Moose Lodge, which closed over 10 years ago. The owner would like to reutilize this building as a banquet facility/community center, with added office space, a day care and an ice cream shop. The property is zoned R-1, Single Family Low Density Residential, which allows previously existing or established commercial uses not already converted to residential use, the ability to run limited businesses with a Special Use Permit. The lot is approximately 6.4 acres. The main building measures approximately 13,000 square feet and the gazebo/storage building measures approximately 2,200 square feet. There are two entrances to the lot and enough parking spaces to cover all of the proposed uses. A privacy fence runs along the southern border of the property, screening the residential uses to the south. Written notice was mailed to all property owners and tenants within 300 feet; staff received no responses. A floor plan and renderings of the building improvements were provided to the board.

D. Morse explained his project. In addition to the items mentioned by staff, he would like to include housing for people with special needs at some point in the future. Although he was not ready to proceed with that part of the development yet, he wanted to move forward on the other portions. He stated that there was a lot of multi-family housing in the area, and he stated that his development would fit in well. T. Michalski asked how much it was going to cost to get the building up to code. D. Morse stated that the building was gutted now, and estimated that it would take \$450,000 to get it where it needed to be. B. Larson observed that the parking lot currently had a lot of cracks in it, and asked M. Franzak if that was acceptable. M. Franzak stated that it was. D. Morse stated that he intended to revitalize the parking lot.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by B. Larson, supported by F. Peterson and

unanimously approved.

A motion that the special use permit to allow a banquet facility, community center, day care, office and ice cream shop in an R-1, Single Family Low Density Residential District at 2330 Barclay be approved, was made by B. Larson, supported by S. Gawron and unanimously approved, with F. Peterson, T. Michalski, B. Larson, S. Gawron, and M. Hovey-Wright voting aye.

Hearing, Case 2017-15: Staff-initiated request to amend Section 2334 of the Zoning Ordinance to amend the rules on electronic message board signs and to allow them in B-1, Limited Business Districts and WM, Waterfront Marine Districts, as well as at churches in all zoning districts and all businesses that have been granted a special use permit in residential districts. The Mart Dock, located at 560 Mart Street (zoned Waterfront Marine), would like to install an electronic message board sign. However, these types of signs are prohibited in Waterfront Marine districts. They are also prohibited in B-1, Limited Business districts and at churches and approved businesses in residential zones. Electronic message board signs have been allowed by the zoning ordinance for over 10 years in some districts, and staff has not received any major complaints on them. Staff has had to deny some electronic message board sign requests for some businesses and churches because of the current sign ordinance. Staff is requesting to allow these signs in more zoning districts to allow these churches and businesses to more effectively promote themselves. There currently are some churches that are allowed to have electronic message board signs because they are located in business districts. However, most churches are located in residential districts. Where already allowed in the current ordinance, there is a provision that states “electronic message boards shall be dimmed at dusk.” This allows staff to enforce the brightness of any sign that may cause a nuisance in a residential areas at night. Staff has not had to enforce this as of yet, but it is good to have if a problem ever arises. In addition to the electronic message board sign request, the Mart Dock also requested to have a 14-foot tall sign. Signs in Waterfront Marine districts are currently allowed a maximum height of 8 feet. Staff feels that the ordinance is adequate here for the most part, given that most Waterfront Marine districts are located in Lakeside, and we should limit the height of pole signs in this area to avoid blight and diminished lake views. However, an 8-foot tall sign would be too small to notice for someone driving on Shoreline Drive (US31-BR). Staff recommends allowing taller signs in these districts as long as the property has frontage on a highway.

M. Hovey-Wright asked why the large sign at Heritage Landing was allowed to be there. M. Franzak stated that the park property was located in a business zoning district.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by B. Larson, supported by F. Peterson and unanimously approved.

A motion that the proposed amendments to the sign ordinance as shown in the staff report, with the grammatical corrections to section 6 (f) be recommended to the City Commission for approval, was made by F. Peterson, supported by M. Hovey-Wright and approved, with with F. Peterson, T. Michalski, B. Larson, S. Gawron, and M. Hovey-Wright voting aye.

Hearing, Case 2017-16: Staff-initiated request to rezone several parcels to R-2, Single Family Medium Density Residential District. This request is a continuation of the rezoning efforts we have been working on to allow smaller lot development on appropriate blocks. A chart showing development standards for R-1, R-2, and R-3 zoning districts was provided along with maps showing the properties affected by the proposed R-2 rezoning.

M. Hovey-Wright asked what the purpose of the rezoning was. M. Franzak stated that the city

wanted to allow more development on vacant lots, and to reduce the number of non-conforming lots, since having a home on a non-conforming lot made it more difficult for homeowners to make improvements to their properties. M. Hovey-Wright asked if there was a down side to the proposal. M. Franzak stated that possibly a neighbor who lived next to a vacant unbuildable lot could now have someone building a home on the property. He stated that development was allowed on smaller lots in the past, but the trend then went to larger lot development, rendering the smaller lots non-conforming and difficult to utilize. S. Gawron stated that other cities were also trending toward smaller lot development.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by B. Larson, supported by F. Peterson and unanimously approved.

A motion that the request to rezone the parcels to R-2, Single Family Medium Density Residential District, as described on the map be recommended for approval to the City Commission was made by F. Peterson, supported by B. Larson and unanimously approved, with F. Peterson, T. Michalski, B. Larson, S. Gawron, and M. Hovey-Wright voting aye.

Hearing, Case 2017-17: Staff-initiated request to rezone several parcels to R-3, Single Family High Density Residential District. This request is also a continuation of rezoning efforts to allow smaller lot development on appropriate blocks. A chart showing development standards for R-1, R-2, and R-3 zoning districts was provided along with maps showing the properties affected by the proposed R-3 rezoning.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by B. Larson, supported by F. Peterson and unanimously approved.

A motion that the request to rezone the parcels to R-3, Single Family High Density Residential District, as described on the map be recommended for approval to the City Commission was made by M. Hovey-Wright, supported by S. Gawron and unanimously approved, with F. Peterson, T. Michalski, B. Larson, S. Gawron, and M. Hovey-Wright voting aye.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m.